

This application is submitted in the name of inventors Kristen Marie Robins and Ronnie B. Kon, both assignors to Cisco Technology, Inc., a California corporation.

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## SPECIFICATION

### TITLE OF INVENTION

#### PASSWORD PROTECTION FOR HIGH RELIABILITY COMPUTER SYSTEMS

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### STATEMENT OF RELATED APPLICATION

This application is related to U.S. patent application Serial No. 09/419,348 entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONFIGURATION IN MULTI PROCESSING ENGINE COMPUTER SYSTEMS", filed on even date herewith in the names of the same inventors and commonly assigned herewith.

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### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to the field of computer systems and data communications networks. More particularly, the present invention relates to a method and apparatus for providing password protection for multiple processing engines (PEs) in a high reliability computer system such as found in a data communications network.

#### The Background

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A computer system on a data communications network is potentially accessible by anyone on the network. Since the Internet interconnects various networks, a computer system on such a network is potentially accessible to the tens of millions of people who now access the Internet. Therefore, security is a major requirement for almost all computer systems, so as to protect such computer systems from inadvertent or intentional accesses and undesirable actions.